

Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), a senior member of the House International Relations Committee, issued the following statement on today's release of the Iraq Study Group report. Congressman Blumenauer voted against the authorization of military force in Iraq and, in March 2006, introduced legislation to begin the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

"I take no pleasure in having my predictions of the scope of the disaster proven correct by events or today's report. The President has driven us into a cul-de-sac, and it is time to face reality: we are going to leave Iraq before the situation is fixed.

"The Iraq Study Group's report, by endorsing the logic of withdrawal and diplomacy, offers a window of opportunity to make the best of a bad situation in the immediate future. For a president who has put politics above the welfare of the American people since day one, the Iraq Study Group provides the cover to finally do the right thing in a politically expedient fashion.

"The war in Iraq has cost Oregon taxpayers nearly \$3 billion, which otherwise could have provided health care for 655,850 people or upwards of 18,000 affordable housing units. With so much at stake, action on Iraq needs to be measured in hours and days, not weeks and months. It is time to face reality in Iraq, and the President and Congress must rise to the occasion."